

## 'Danton', 'Crime and Punishment', Brenton's 'Genius'







create such effects of distancing in space and time and yet bring us close to multitudinous beings unlike ourselves in almost every way. Could it have been something to do with those restless early years, exiled back and forth between Merseyside and Port Said? The sea voyages would have been odysseys of estrangement for a sensitive child.

The uneventfulness of his life suggests that, like Bertrand Russell, Stapledon felt cursed by loneliness. His novels are short on dialogue and often read like debates with himself. In one remarkable section of *Chapter Ten of Star Maker*, the journeying human soul, with spirit friends, views the galaxy at an early stage of its existence. The passage is far too long to quote in full; it concludes with a view of the fully evolved galaxy:

The stars themselves gave an irresistible impression of vitality. Strange that the movements of these merely physical things, these mere fire-balls, whirling and travelling according to the geometrical laws of their minutest particles, should seem so vital, so questing. But then the whole galaxy was itself so vital, so like an organism, with its delicate tracery of star-streams, like the streams within a living cell; and its extended wreaths, almost like feelers; and its nucleus of light. Surely this great and lovely creature must be alive, must have intelligent experience of itself and of things other than it.

Then comes one of those quick contradictions which endow Stapledon's narrative with its tensile strength:

In the tide of these wild thoughts we checked our fancy, remembering that only on the rare grains called planets can life gain foothold, and that all this wealth of restless jewels was but a waste of fire.

Under the detached tone is an almost antithetical belief in life everywhere, sentience everywhere. One of Stapledon's last fantasies, *The Flaming*, postulates a madman's vision of fire as having intellect.

With rich paradox, rich bleakness, and beauty, Fiedler is well-equipped to deal. "Ecstasy" is one of Stapledon's favourite words, and the ecstasy usually involves both pain and pleasure. For there is pleasure of a high order in making that desperate voyage to come face-to-face with the Star Maker, and pain in discovering that this universe is but one in a sequence of universes, each imperfect in its way. "Cosmos after cosmos, each more rich and subtle than the last, leapt from his fervent imagination." In the extraordinary Chapter Fifteen, Stapledon describes a succession of these flawed cosmoses, each one in turn failing ultimately to satisfy its creator, who stores them away like so many old video games in a cupboard, as he turns to prepare a yet more complex strategy.

## Onward, ever onward

J. R. Durant

ISAAC ASIMOV

*The Roving Mind*

350pp. New York: Prometheus

\$17.95

ISBN 0 819 56001 7

I have many times in my life read Isaac Asimov's work. It is a large book, subdivided by topic, and every imaginable topic, hammering away relentlessly at an electric typewriter. Every two or three minutes a sheet of paper comes off the machine and another is put in its place. Rather less frequently than this, Asimov pauses for thought or glances at a work of reference to check a point of information. But for the most part, he simply types, transforming, blindingly, a paper trail of knowledge into a masterpiece of good, clean, hard, most people would say boring, writing. It is impossible to read *The Roving Mind* without forming at least some impression of how it came to be written. For Asimov is extremely proud of his extraordinary literary productivity, and he is wise enough to see the opportunity to inform us of the exact rate at which the words are landing

Our own cosmos is in turn about to unfold at odds with Christian doctrine. The point is made more than once. "There was no pity, no proffer of salvation, no kindly aid. Or here were all pity and all love, but mastered by a frosty ecstasy." Later, "All passions, it seemed, were comprised within the spirit's temper; but mastered, icily gripped within the cold, clear, crystal ecstasy of contemplation." This is closer to Thomas Hardy than Thomas Aquinas.

As Fiedler emphasizes, it was this display of coldness, this sense — to quote Fiedler's chapter heading — that God is Not Love, which moved C. S. Lewis to characterize Stapledon as the possessed scientist. Weston, in *Out of the Silent Planet* and *Perelandra*. This pillorying, sadly enough, represents about the peak of Stapledon's fame. He did not respond to Lewis. He always maintained a low profile, probably preferring the ecstasies of contemplation and chrysanthemums. Or perhaps, from the distance of the Wirral, he imagined that C. S. Lewis was one of those Bloomsburyites.

There was one occasion when Stapledon failed to keep a low profile. He turned up at the Waldorf Astoria in New York in 1949, for a meeting of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, organized by the Soviet Union. Stapledon was the only British delegate.

Fiedler makes a good deal of this event, probably because he can draw on an eyewitness, Sam Moskowitz, the well-known scholar of SF. Stapledon was then sixty-three and evidently feeling his age; he would die the following year. Moskowitz represents him as being deeply troubled that his books were out of print. It is surely easy to extend sympathy to such a figure who — blind to appearing a glib fellow-traveller — seized on this wretched opportunity to cut some kind of figure in a world whose attention he had failed to capture.

Moskowitz gives Fiedler a chance to play the old game of trying to assess a writer by his influence on other writers, as if this were a sole measure of fitness. Moskowitz lists Eric Frank Russell, Clifford Simak, Robert Heinlein, and others who, had they truly experienced Stapledon, would have written differently. Fiedler includes Philip K. Dick, Ursula LeGuin, and Stanislaw Lem, as well as an example from Paul Anderson, which might more reasonably come under the heading of cribbing.

Stapledon is so inventive that many

passages could be pointed to as notes be put away. In the succeeding cosmos, according to the thought of the Star Maker, the physical will be "more patently phantasmal than in our own cosmos", while the beings who inhabit it will be "far less deceived by the opacity of their individual mental processes, and more sensitive to their underlying unity".

What really sets this dramatic unfolding at odds with Christian ruthlessness. The point is made more than once. "There was no pity, no proffer of salvation, no kindly aid. Or here were all pity and all love, but mastered by a frosty ecstasy." Later, "All passions, it seemed, were comprised within the spirit's temper; but mastered, icily gripped within the cold, clear, crystal ecstasy of contemplation." This is closer to Thomas Hardy than Thomas Aquinas.

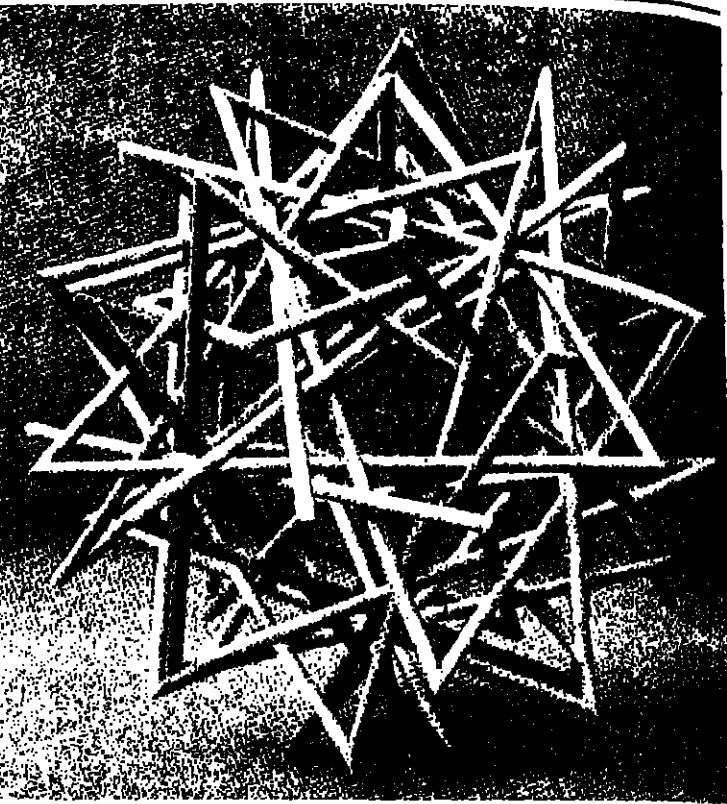
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A regular icosalink in which each ring links with six others; reproduced from Orderly Tangles by Alan Holden (97pp. Columbia University Press, \$26.0231 055447).

## From pulp to art

Gregory Feeley

COLIN GREENLAND

*The Entropy Exhibition: Michael Moorcock and the British "New Wave" in science fiction*

244pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul

£11.95

0 7100 9310 1

Amazing, a sample of twenty-five copies from 1959 to 1961 yields only one cover picture with a woman on it, and she is far away in the background... serving behind a counter." In addition to being an incomplete comparison (how many women were there on the *Amazing* cover?) the passage raises suspicions that Greenland drew for his research on incomplete files of old American pulp magazines — which admittedly are University libraries, especially in Britain — and that his findings were therefore distorted.

Colin Greenland's first book benefits from having a distinctly bounded and straightforward subject: Michael Moorcock's editorship, during 1964-73, of the British science fiction magazine *New Worlds* and its signal role in founding what was called the "New Wave" in modern science fiction. The subject demands treatment, for the advent of the "New Wave" proved a cardinal point in science fiction's shift from a pulp fiction genre to something closer to art. By 1960 pressures were growing within the field to overturn the constraints of genre, and the middle of the decade saw a number of new SF periodicals as well as older magazines under new and iconoclastic editors. Moorcock was the outstanding free-breather of this period, and it would be valuable to have an account of *New Worlds*'s contribution to the general phenomenon; Greenland, however, declines to provide this, scanning the activities of Moorcock's predecessors and his (largely American) contemporaries in order to present a partisan case for *New Worlds*'s unassisted revolt. Ahistorical and sometimes disingenuous, Greenland tacitly acknowledges that greater familiarity with the subject may allow disagreement with his history though he asks to be excused on the grounds that his concern is with SF's future potential, not its dubious past; and he admits that his "lucid account of how contemporary movements in science fiction — cyberpunk, post-apocalyptic, SF, dystopian, and so on — have emerged from Moorcock's innovations is of course oversimplification" (which he justifies as a corrective to other unspecified commentaries). Admissible by dint of being the first book on the subject, *The Entropy Exhibition* is a useful compendium of dates and quotations, but is reduced by its biases and methodological inadequacies.

Questions of methodology occur frequently to those more knowledgeable readers Greenland nervously mentions. Discussing the treatment of "sex in American science fiction in the 1950s, Greenland ignores the two more literate of the period's three major SF magazines (*Galaxy* and *Fantasy and Science Fiction*), and instead contrasts reactionary publications with *Amazing Stories*, then derisively moribund and past its prime. This procedure results in statements such as: "This is not to say that *Amazing* was a misogynist publication, but it certainly" to

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## The advantages of knowing

Mark Ridley

NICHOLAS HUMPHREY

*Consciousness Regained: Chapters in the development of mind*

220pp. Oxford University Press

£12.95

0 19 217732 X

The usual part of a Darwinist, in a discussion of the nature of man, is to stress evolutionary continuity. No characteristics he will have to emphasize are found in all humans, only in humans. You cannot define humans by the possession of language or culture, tool-using or any other character you can imagine. They are all found, in some form, in animals. It is in fact a logical consequence of evolution that species do not have essential, defining characteristics.

And yet, when that has all been said, there is something biologically peculiar about man. Humans are peculiarly sensitive, intelligent, inventive. Anyone, even a zoologist, would be surprised to see a bee writing a book review. And if the human mind is biologically odd, its oddity calls for biological explanation. We have all these abilities, self-awareness, intelligence, art and aesthetics, but to what good? This is a perplexing question, so difficult that biologists (before the advent of retirement) normally have it well alone. But Nicholas Humphrey, while still a young man, began to write a whole book about it. I had heard of this project, and looked forward to seeing its fruits. I even expected that *Consciousness Regained* might be it. But it is not. Humphrey has now departed from the sub-department of 'Animal Behaviour' at Cambridge, to join Channel 4 television, and that projected book has now (it seems) been shelved. Instead we must make do with a mixed collection of broadcasts and earlier rarely to be found in public University libraries, especially in Britain — and that his findings were therefore distorted.

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## Cold-blooded cognition

Martin Richards

SORAN MODJIL, CELIA MODJIL and GREGORY BROWN (Editors)

*An interdisciplinary*

220pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul

£12.95

0 7100 9451 5

Three years have passed since Piaget's death and perhaps the time has come to attempt some overall assessment of his contribution. But the difficulties are enormous. His output was daunting, his books being published annually (much of his sixty-year career). His scope was wide, spanning the boundaries of psychology into philosophy, biology and other disciplines. And to those in the field, his work was often controversial, and he often seemed to be about outside, some of his work above the day-to-day life of most psychologists and was spared the usual mundane preoccupations of the field.

The present conference volume describes itself as a sustained inquiry and an attempt to take stock, but it is hardly up to the task. Most of the twenty-odd chapters by different hands are arranged in pairs with pro and con views. While this arrangement avoids the dull repetition of praise from converted, it makes it impossible to sustain an inquiry, especially as most of the authors seem unaware of what the others have written. The conference has a pleasingly eclectic feel, but the resulting edited volume may have a place in science, but they form an inappropriate vehicle for the evaluation of a theory as rich and complex as Piaget's.

and pleasantly written, often enlivened by wit, always easy to follow. There is no difficult science: Humphrey uses (as he says more "the evidence of anecdote and common experience") than of experiment. This being so, the essays are not as rigorous or convincing as the best biological work on adaptation: "anecdote and common experience" are various enough to provide evidence of almost anything. The pieces charm more by their style than their ideas; but the ideas are at least worthy of consideration. Only in the two items on bombs are the ideas uniformly poor. One suggests that the problem is that our political leaders wear clothes, which cover up their humanity; the other that the problem can be solved by "public argument and public anger", "screaming" and other "loud and strident" noises. Well, Humphrey is not the only one to have lost his understanding of politics in the Fenland mists.

But his main subject is the evolution of mind. "Conscious experience" he defines as "the set of subjective feelings which, at any one time, are available to introspection; that is, the sensations, emotions, volitions etc."; and "an animal displays intelligence when it modifies its behaviour on the basis of valid inference from evidence". Nature is (as Humphrey says) a "careful economist", and "it is not her habit to tolerate needless extravagance". Characteristics will only be maintained in animals if they confer an advantage, a reproductive advantage, relative to their alternative. I should say at the outset that the reproductive advantage in question would have been in the past, during the period of evolution, and not necessarily now. The formative years for human intellect were the years when man lived as a social savage on the plains of Africa. What, then, is the question of consciousness? Its alternative is simply its absence. If, for example, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the air that I am breathing increases, receptors in my blood vessels sense the change, and cause my rate of breathing to increase, which will restore the oxygen level in my blood to normal. I will be completely unaware of my decision to breathe harder. The relevant Darwinian question is, why are not all my decisions comparably unconscious? Similarly for intelligence, why be so clever? How did an ability to solve differential equations, or write books, ever help anyone to have more offspring?

## Cold-blooded cognition

growing interest in child development, that his ideas began to be seen as a major theoretical position with the same kind of status as that of Freud or the behaviourists. British and American journals began to publish experimental studies within the framework of his theory. As these have accumulated they have created a more negative view of his work or, at least, have served to dispel some of the enthusiasm that was current, especially in the US, in the late 1960s. Quite apart from theoretical criticisms, studies have not always confirmed his original accounts of what children do. In particular, what they do may be critically dependent on the precise way in which a question is asked or a task presented. What may appear to be an inability to understand a set of logical relations may be a sophisticated attempt to give the experimenter a sensible answer to a silly question. Do these difficulties fatally flaw the theory or is it merely a matter of reworking and extending the basic framework? Where do we stand?

The present conference volume describes itself as a sustained inquiry and an attempt to take stock, but it is hardly up to the task. Most of the twenty-odd chapters by different hands are arranged in pairs with pro and con views. While this arrangement avoids the dull repetition of praise from converted, it makes it impossible to sustain an inquiry, especially as most of the authors seem unaware of what the others have written. The conference has a pleasingly eclectic feel, but the resulting edited volume may have a place in science, but they form an inappropriate vehicle for the evaluation of a theory as rich and complex as Piaget's.

I am sure the contributors to this volume enjoyed their weekend at Brighton, where the conference was held. But as far as taking stock of Piaget's work and the Geneva school he founded is concerned, this book is little more than notes for drawing up the agenda.

Humphrey has an answer to all these questions. Our minds, he thinks, have evolved because we are so highly social. Social life presents many opportunities for self-advancement, if one knows how to behave. Self-awareness, Humphrey believes, is advantageous because it enables us to model, and so to anticipate, the behaviour of others; we became "natural psychologists". The life of social animals is highly problematical. In a complex society, such as those we know exist among higher primates, there are benefits to be gained for each individual member both from preserving the overall structure of the group and at the same time from exploiting and out-manoeuvring others within it. But to obtain those benefits you have to be clever, and (he tells us) self-aware. Then, by introspective psychology, the behaviour of others can be anticipated. "Human beings are born psychologists. Subtle of heart and head, they are uniquely skilful in their ability to handle one another. They know better than any other animal how to anticipate — and work upon — the behaviour of fellow members of their species." "Consciousness" has evolved, Humphrey concludes, "as a biological adaptation for doing introspective psychology."

The argument I have just condensed fills the first five chapters. But if we predict the behaviour of others introspectively, and if the ability to predict is biologically advantageous, then it follows that we should extend and refine our self-knowledge, so that we can predict more, and better. In his next three chapters Humphrey considers various means by which we may enrich our repository of experience. The headings under which he distributes his discussion are summary enough: play, manipulation by family, dreams, pets, rites of passage, drama, even soap opera.

Our aestheticism — our appreciation of art — is also a biological adaptation. Here the advantage stems from the need to classify. It is advantageous (for the fairly obvious reasons) to classify the objects in the world. One technique of classifying is to build up a catalogue of objects, which are then referred to by name. This technique (Humphrey believes) is reflected in the kind of art that we like, namely objects that differ, but only by a little, from what is already familiar.

So much for Humphrey's theory. What are we to make of it? For the

main question, consciousness, I fear, it fails completely. For intelligence it is more successful. It would indeed probably be advantageous to be clever in a complex, competitive society. Whether that is the explanation of our exceptional intelligence is another matter. But at least the argument leads to the conclusion required of it. For consciousness, it does not. Of course it is advantageous, in social life, to be able to predict the behaviour of others. But Humphrey's theory does not answer the question of why humans evolved to be self-aware rather than not. He tackles the question "What use is consciousness?" by considering how, in fact, consciousness may be used. But that is not enough. He should also have considered, in more depth, whether the same tasks could not be accomplished as efficiently by an unconscious machine.

Take the case of the awareness of pain. "We show", Humphrey says, "negligible concern for a fish which neither squeals nor screws up its face when it is hooked through the lip by a fisherman — though we should have the fisherman arrested if he did the same thing to a kitten." Humphrey thinks we may be right. Consciousness (he thinks) is an adaptation to social life; cats are highly social, most fish are not; so whereas cats may feel pain, fish probably do not. There is no advantage to a fish in feeling pain; if it meets danger it should automatically swim away. But why not the kitten too? Humphrey replies, that the kitten, by expressing its feelings of pain, can influence the behaviour of others. So it can. But a cat does not need to be conscious either to express feelings, or to respond to them. Both could be done automatically. So, interesting as Humphrey's argument is, I deny that it works.

I have remarked that *Consciousness Regained* is not rigorously argued. Much of it is plausible, none of it is

compelling. There is not enough self-criticism. Humphrey will not challenge his arguments harshly, to see whether they really stand up. He does mention two kinds of critic, psychological behaviourists (Watson and Skinner) and philosophical positivists (Wittgenstein). But he does not take them seriously, he does not argue with them on their own ground. He snipes from a distance: behaviourism is misguided, and as for positivism, well that is just the philosophy of cynics and sportsmen. "Too often in this century philosophers have forbidden the rest of us to speak about the function and origin of consciousness. They have walled the subject off behind a Maginot Line. The defences sometimes look impressive. But biologists, advancing through the Low Countries, should not be afraid to march round them." Elsewhere, in a different metaphor, he is equally short with "philosophical Cassandras".

Humphrey is a capable critic, as his book reviews show. We can even find him, like a kill-joy, throwing buckets of cold biological water on the paradoxes of the philosophy of mind. "Teasing though their paradoxes are, the questions they raise — Can machines think? etc. — are ultimately silly questions." Philosophical paradoxes (he believes) would be better off in evolutionary psychology. Perhaps they would. I will only remark that, although I am an evolutionary biologist, I would give some credence to these philosophical Cassandras. I am not even sure what the problem of consciousness is. So I believe that there is a lesson for Dr Humphrey in the history of antiquity. After the daughter of Hecuba had slighted the passions of Apollo, she was condemned (although she could foresee the future) never to be believed. The citizens of Troy ignored her; and Agamemnon, despite her warnings, took her, as his concubine, back to his wife. All of Cassandra's predictions came true.

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## Subversive connections

Roy Foster

### ROGER WELLS

*Insurrection: The British Experience 1795-1803*  
312pp. Gloucester: Alan Sutton. £16.  
0 86299 019 X

Treatment of the subjects and period dealt with in this book is too often pitched in a tone both combative and rancorous. This is partly because the issues raised can easily be cast in terms of immediate rather than historical preoccupations in politics, and partly because the field is becoming well tilled, and the available evidence necessarily limited: an aggressive stance is often taken up in order to stake out personal territory against interlopers. This interesting study is flawed, and in some ways vitiated, by both weaknesses.

From the beginning, Roger Wells' manoeuvres are cramped by the operations of others in the field: Ann Hone has recently analysed contemporary London Radicalism, and J. E. Cookson has dealt with the peace movement during the Napoleonic wars. Most importantly for present purposes, Marianne Elliott's magisterial *Partners in Revolution* has reviewed the connections between Irish rebels and French revolutionaries, combining stringent research and equable judgment to make the subject her own. All these books deal with historiographical controversies: all make their points no less effectively for their restraint. This approach is not for Dr Wells, whose predecessors in the field are variously described as "reactionary", "naïve", "myopic", "sterile" and "imbecile in their isolationism". Countering assertions are equally extravagant, E. P. Thompson's work being "magnificent" and "unsurpassable" while

the author's own discoveries are crisply described as "staggering". All this is counter-productive as well as wearisome; there is a good deal of interesting material here, and even if it is not as suggestive as its author would like, the implications raised do not require such shrill pleading.

This is no less true for the fact that many of Wells' assertions, like those of others in the field, depend upon what he calls "speculative analysis" and inference. The interactions between Irish and British radical activity in the period have been well established over recent years; Wells adds to the picture of triangular activity between London, Yorkshire and Ireland, and postulates a network of connections stretching up to the "respectable" reaches of parliamentary opposition, as well as down to the secret stores of pikes and the oaths sworn in country pubs. This raises the wrangle over evidence and representativeness familiar since the irruption on to the historiographical scene of Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class*; and though the vision of Francis Burdett as a would-be Philippe Egalité is more persuasive since Hone's work, the idea of Fox and the Duke of Norfolk ("fabulously prestigious", in Wells's rather odd locution) as serious revolutionaries may cause some surprise. Here as elsewhere, Elliott's restraint is more persuasive: "the role of the opposition in a United programme was one of government-forming when success had been achieved rather than active participation in its attainment, and given the long association between the opposition and many United leaders, the latter's belief in such co-operation was reasonable." In safer times, glamorous figures like O'Connor and Fitzgerald had attracted fellow-travellers; by the late 1790s, the situation had changed. Here, as elsewhere, Wells plays down the importance of the wartime mentality.

Where he does produce interesting material is on the Secret Service and the Alien Office - notably the figure of William Wickham, the government's vital counter-revolutionary operator, later to find a berth as Irish Chief Secretary. Wells does not, however, give him credit for the feelings which eventually drove him into retirement: self-disgust at being "compelled by his official duty to prosecute to death men capable and [sic] acting as Emmet has done in his last moments for making an effort to liberate their country from grievances the existence of many of which none can deny of which I myself have acknowledged to be unjust, oppressive and unchristian . . .

Too often, in fact, this study ignores the ambivalence, muddle and self-delusion of human actions, by attempting to construct a schematic "alternative" history. Too often, also, the interesting patterns that are drawn out regarding counter-subversion measures, or the interaction between food shortages and popular politics, are obscured by the poor production of the work as a whole. This book represents many years of research, and a large accumulation of detailed examples and references; it needed careful editorial attention, which is conspicuously lacking on every level. Notably in the sections concerning Ireland, inaccuracies abound. It does not instil confidence to be told that the eighteenth-century Ascendancy "imposed a Protestant church" on the native Irish; nor to find Robert Emmet identified as T. A. Emmet's son (and Thomas Pakenham as a "nationalist historian"). Other references regarding the Irish dimension are completely obscure until the consistently appalling level of proof-reading is grasped: thus the Brehon laws appear repeatedly as "Breton", and references to "Gaelic" practices must presumably be read as "Gaelic". (Wells may, however, have a case for describing Father Philip Roche as a "heroic libertine" rather than "libertarian".) Throughout the work, a film is imposed between reader and writer by recurring idiosyncrasies of spelling, punctuation and usage: "consols", for instance, appear as "consuls", the word "prevaricate" is invariably used instead of "procrastinate", and "conflagration" employed to signify any kind of outbreak, however uncom-

bustible. The text has to be deconstructed as it is read.

Wells is throughout attempting to make a case, and such erratic presentation can only muddle his message. Much of that case seems over-dramatic unless one bears in mind his description of "revolutionary activity" as "including popular movements and mass pressure for political reform on democratic principles". Given this generous definition, the only large quibble left is the meaning of "mass", and contemporaries as acute as George Canning saw that this was a "tulle and futile argument . . . when was a revolution effected in any state but by an active and enterprising minority?" In the twenty years since Thompson's blockbuster, the question of relations and balance between state, minority and putative majority has been fiercely argued, often in terms that are a transparent cipher for more modern preoccupations. Wells's book is an intermittently absorbing statement on one side of the debate; but unless taken in conjunction with other recent contributions, the illumination it provides can only be fitful.

## Victims of the blight

Joseph Lee

### JOEL MOKYR

*Why Ireland Starved: A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800-1850*  
330pp. Allen and Unwin. £22.50.  
0 04 941010 5

Why the Irish Famine claimed, on Joel Moky's estimate, well over a million victims between 1846 and 1851, remains a major puzzle of Western European history. The Dutch-American Moky, a leading New Economic Historian, seeks to establish the causes, to which relatively little systematic attention has been devoted in the literature, that left the Irish economy uniquely vulnerable to the ravages of the potato blight. His procedure is to review in separate chapters the familiar explanations of Irish poverty - over-population, landlordism, agrarian outrage, fatal shortage, labour difficulties, entrepreneurial failure, emigration. He marches the candidates in succession on to the parade-ground, inspects them closely, then dispatches them imperiously with the injunction, "must do better". This approach provides a stimulating survey of the current state of research into Irish economic history in the first half of the nineteenth century. In addition, his own explorations yield a rich harvest of information and interpretation. There are important new estimates of key demographic variables, including Famine mortality rates, infant mortality rates, age at marriage, and birth-rates.

Some of the conclusions may raise hackles as well as eyebrows. Moky dismisses the Malthusian model of Irish starvation. "Had there been no famine, Ireland's population would have continued to grow like any other European country in the second half of the nineteenth century. Whether that growth would have had any significant effect on the standard of living seems very much in doubt. 'Small farms', he feels, 'could have been viable in Ireland.' Agrarian outrage, on the other hand, 'very much retarded general economic development. But Ireland allegedly suffered not only no Keynesian, but little structural unemployment. Even its exceptional level of seasonal unemployment was not fundamental to its distress. The real problem, according to Moky, was the low productivity of agriculture, which was due less to land scarcity than to the quantity of other inputs which were available, apart from labour and land." He seems to attribute the key deficiencies largely to the entrepreneurial inadequacy of the landlord class, which in turn he ultimately traces to the consequences of the English plantations of earlier

centuries - a robustly popular interpretation to follow on the application of econometric techniques.

So bald a list of some of the more striking, and sometimes controversial, findings cannot begin to capture the ingenuity of the calculations and the fertility of the hypotheses that make this an exceptionally rewarding work. It may be, indeed, that the very fecundity of Moky's mind has sometimes diverted his aim from the main target, and even tempted him into the trap of explaining too much. For there is a certain imbalance between the seventeen-page penultimate chapter on the Famine itself, and the preceding two hundred and sixty pages. For all their power and penetration, these do not quite prepare the reader for two issues central to the Famine chapter, the regional variations in death-rates, and the importance of consumption patterns. "Ireland" did not, of course, starve. The Famine was heavily regional in its impact. Moky does assert on his very first page that "poverty was not confined to the proverbially wretched conditions in the Irish West: it was bad in the cottages of Armagh, in the grazing farms of the midlands, and in the Wicklow mountains. It was almost synonymous with life in Ireland." The structure of the book obliges us to wait, however, until page 267, for the crucial estimate of Famine deaths by county. While this records some excess mortality in even the least affected areas, the dramatic regional variations provide the most striking feature. It should be stressed that the work, the first page notwithstanding, contains important information on regional differences, though the author's "content analysis" approach to the evidence before the Poor Law Commission and the Devon Commission, illuminating though it is in some respects, may not take quite sufficient account of the underlying fragility of a great deal of the material. But this information is not directly related to explaining the differences at county level recorded in the excess mortality table. It might have been wiser to have begun the book with this chapter, and to have sought systematic regional explanations for the recorded mortality differences, rather than relying largely on explanations of poverty at a national level to capture an essentially local phenomenon.

The nagging doubt about the specification of the regional question is reinforced by the suspicion that the analysis concentrates excessively on problems of production rather than consumption. This may be inherent in Moky's tendency to prefer supply-side explanations of under-development. In addition, his commitment of econometric techniques, naturally, and fruitfully, tempts him to focus on quantitative evidence, which happens to be far more abundant for production than for consumption in the pre-

Famine economy. Relatively little of the analytical thrust of the volume, much of which is devoted to explaining the lack of investment in agriculture, seems to lead up to the crucial observation in the Famine chapter that "Irish agriculture, after all, was diversified. . . . It was the consumption pattern of its lower classes that was insufficiently diversified." Certainly, starving Connaught cottiers watching their puny boards of food being whisked away to pay the rent in 1847 can have derived scant comfort from the reassurance that "the outflow of savings through landlords investing abroad . . . must have been wholly offset in the long run by export surpluses." That was truly a Keynesian "long run"! A consequence of the supply-side approach is that the probing discussion of the impact of landlordism on the economy devotes relatively little attention to the implications of the role of rent for demand patterns.

Moky, as befitts a comparative economic historian, treats Ireland as a case-study in the global history of poverty. Enlightening though this perspective is, it may be doubted if Ireland's experience in the first half of the nineteenth century serves as a grim reminder of the cost of failing to industrialize. The Famine, after all, occurred in the political unit boasting the most industrialized economy of the time. Most of Western Europe failed to industrialize before 1847. But the "hungry 40s" did not turn into famines on the continent. The east of Ireland had similarly failed to industrialize, but it suffered nothing like the tragedy of the west. Moky's own estimate suggests that excess mortality was actually higher in the relatively industrialized north-east than in the less industrialized south-east. It may be that development must be distinguished more clearly from industrialization, and its meaning explored further. That promises to be one of the many wider issues in the debate likely to be provoked by constantly attacking approach Moky adopts towards his subject. It is to be hoped that this occasionally exasperating, but always exciting, study, in which every chapter is worth review, article in its own right, will arouse the constructive response it so richly deserves.

*The Partition of Ireland 1911-1925* by Michael Laffan is the first in a new series of Student Paperbacks published for the Dublin Historical Association by the Dundalgan Press, Dundalk, Co. Du. (138pp. IR£3. 0 86221 06 6). The opening chapters outline the historical background prior to the First World War, which is dealt with in Chapter 3. Laffan goes on to consider the Government of Ireland Act, the Fein and the Treaty, and the Boundary Commission, and concludes with a chapter on the "Two Irish states".

## Six poems from *The Price of Stone*

Richard Murphy

### Friary

Each time you breathe my name - Ross Errilly -  
Young leaf-growth rustles in the druid wood,  
Felled to convert my land so thoroughly  
Stone crosses stand on grass where forest stood.

Here the rain harps on ruins, plucking lost  
Tunes from my structure, which the wind pours through  
In jackdaw desecration, carping at the dust  
And leprous sores my towers like beggars show.

Now my fish-ponds hold no water. Doors and aisles  
Are stacked with donors' tombs, badly inventoryed,  
A gift for peeping toms: my lecherous gargoyles  
Hacked off by thieves, the bones unresurrected.

Here, too, buried in rhyme, lovers lie dead,  
Engraved in words that live each time they're read.

### Wattle Tent

Lobawn, he calls me in shelta, his duck nest  
Under a thorn-bush on a petting out lane;  
Wattled with hazel cut from the remotest  
Copse of a departed ascendancy domesne.

Fourteen lithe rods, carved into wish-bones, keep  
My head up in the rain. My tarred and buttered  
Skin he's smoked and cured. Rats from a trash-heap  
Steal bits of his begged bread, but he's not bothered.

Thrown back by cheap wine on to his last straw  
He finds I can help the pain. His seed has spread  
From road to road: boys gathering scrap in new  
Pick-ups, girls as young as Juliet wedded.

It dawned on me, when his bantam cock crows,  
I'll house him till he dies, wherever he goes.

### Baymount

Describe a gate-lodge like a dragon's mouth  
Taking in boys and parents with a grin;  
Then spitting out the parents. Iron teeth  
Close when the last proud vintage car has gone.

Start counting days of terminal homesickness  
Minus the love of those who left you here.  
Draw six parallel lines cut quick across  
Two flaming circles. Be prepared for war.

Stand up, our youngest new boy, what's-your-name!  
Your uncle ate a wineglass in his mess  
At Woolwich, and Dobbs major's live worm  
Washed down with ink. Prove you're no cowardly ass!

Open your mouth wide, and with one bite take  
The candle burning on this tower of cake!

### Lecknavarna

Look where I'm stuck the wrong side of Lough Fee:  
Bad road, no neighbours, in the squally shade  
Of a bleak mountain. Yet you took to me  
When young. What made you seek my solitude?

Did you need my poor virgin concrete shell  
No family cared to live in, just to write  
Poetry, worshipping my waterfall,  
Abased in loneliness by lust at night?

Still flowing steadfast in a flagstone cleft  
Of stunted alders clinging on, it pours  
With resonant gravity, bringing the gift  
Of widespread raindrops crafted to great force.

Hearing that strong cadence, you learned your trade  
Concerned with song in endless falling, stayed.

### Beehive Cell

There's no comfort inside me, only a small  
Hart's-tongue sprouting square, with pyramidal headroom  
For one man alone kneeling down: a smell  
Of peregrine mutes and eremitical boredom.

Once, in my thirteen hundred years on this barren  
Island, have I felt a woman giving birth,  
On her own in my spinal carebellie souterrain,  
To a living child, as she knelt on earth.

She crawled under my lintel that purgatorial night  
Her menfolk marooned her out of their coracle  
To pick dillisk and sloke. What hand brought a light  
With angelica root for the pain of her miracle?

Three days she thrived in me, suckling the child,  
Doing all she had to do, the sea going wild.

### Wellington Testimonial

Needling my native sky over Phoenix Park  
I obelize the victory of wit  
That let my polished Anglo-Irish mark  
Be made, by Smirke, as a colossal spit.

Properly dressed for an obsolete parade,  
Devoid of mystery, no winding stair  
Threading my unvernacular head,  
I've kept my foot, but lost my noisy flair.

My life was work: my work was taking life  
To be a monument. The dead have won  
Capital headlines. Look at Ireland rife  
With maxima: need you ask what good I've done?

My sole point in this evergreen oak aisle  
Is to maintain a clean, laconic style.

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Handwritten note in right margin: "The Price of Stone" and other illegible scribbles.



## commentary

## Disillusionment and destiny

Graham Bradshaw

FREDERICK DELIUS  
Fennimore and GerdaSTEPHEN PAULUS  
The Postman Always Rings Twice  
King's Theatre, Edinburgh

At one stage it looked as though the Opera Theatre of St Louis would bring a production of *Conventicola* with Frederica von Stade to Edinburgh. In being a "safe" choice, that would have misrepresented this company's admirable enterprise — both in encouraging young, relatively unknown singers and in presenting new or neglected works. In the event, they brought a new opera by Stephen Paulus and Delius's rarely performed *Fennimore and Gerda* — the latter directed by Frank Corsaro, a born-again Delian who has already made the case for *Loanga* and *Margot la Rouge*. This was more daring, so all the more disappointing for those who believe, as I do, that Delius's last opera is problematic but richly rewarding.

What is needed is a positive response to the problems, which were trenchantly set out in Beecham's book on Delius. First, there is the libretto, which presents eleven "pictures" from J. P. Jacobsen's novel *Niels Lyhne*. Beecham thought that *Fennimore*, like *Arabesque*, could only be performed in Danish, since the English and German versions of Jacobsen were inadequate. Next, Beecham thought the characters "rather dreary people who have nothing to sing" but brood in Scandinavian fashion on their complex frustrations. Worst of all, for Beecham, was the "feeble and meaningless effect of anti-climax" after the "powerful and semi-tragic dénouement" of the nine scenes which culminate in Fennimore's death. Delius takes on a "childishly sentimental" and contrived "happy ending" in which Niels is united to the youthfully bubbly, vapid Gerda.

In Jacobsen, Gerda brings only a brief respite: she dies young, and Niels dies in a military hospital. Delius's drafts show that he considered the bleaker conclusion: might he not also have assumed — say, like a composer setting episodes from *Wilhelm Meister* or *Werther* — that an audience would then be familiar with Jacobsen's once-celebrated novel, so that even the "happy" ending would be ironically clouded? To be sure, what we make of that necessarily speculative question depends on how we see "Nature" figuring in this work: was Delius really trying to fiddle some soothing last-minute affirmation in which the winter tale wakes to spring — or is the "natural" perspective — of the implacable seasonal process a more dispiriting means of diminishing the equivocal human tragedies while also rendering them all the more poignant? This would be more consistent with Jacobsen's novel: with what we know of Delius's depression in this period (and the Munch-like cover of the 1917 vocal score), with the insouciant

presentation of a meaningless accident as some kind of destiny (as in Janáček's *Osud*); and with Eric Fenby's statement that Delius's "short sharp opera" was a study in "artistic disillusionment" and the "futility of striving for happiness in passion", and that the "tragedy of these ordinary people" is "made pathetically insignificant by reflection in Delius's musical imagery of Autumn's dying beauties".

Relying extensively on projected film, Corsaro's production starts promisingly with oppressive skies like those in Strindberg's paintings; but the natural images and sound become unrecognizably pretty — all leaves, running water and birdsong. The sameness of this blurs the subtly differentiated musical interludes, and the interpolated snaps of plectrics or painting sessions destroy the dramatic contrast between the interludes and the "pictures". In any case, much of the interpolated "business" is wrong. Fennimore doesn't take a gun, then run into the snow, and then encounter Erik's funeral procession. In the tenth "picture", Niels is not a writer but a farmer; the condition of his being "healed" is a repudiation of art, "dreams" and "imagination", and a return to the "earth" which is as equivocal as that of "Hamsun" in

Derek Mahon's much misunderstood diptych of poems contrasting Hamsun with Brecht (cf this paper's recent correspondence columns). The singers do their best, and Fennimore (Kathryn Bouleyn) is very promising; but they are under-directed and rely on shop-worn gestures.

*The Postman Always Rings Twice* is musically very thin — typically consisting of single, wispy strands of melody accompanied by insomniac tom-toms on piano or harp, with occasional woodwind splutters to establish that this is a "contemporary" score — and also dramatically indecisive, pitched uncertainly between Menottiian *verismo* and the American musical. That the audience finds relief in a vaudeville routine only emphasizes the uncertainty of tone. The singers do what they can — under-directed once again — with lines like "You like a guitar Frank?" or "When they say go ya gotta go." Cora's vamping with a cigarette on a porch, or making love and getting up again in the same musical phrase (setting a record which babbos couldn't rival) hardly establish the raunchy sexuality which makes her decide her husband's gotta go. This fails to be faithful to James M. Cain's novel; but it is a case — unlike the *Fennimore* — where one couldn't care less about "fidelity".



One of Edward Gordon Craig's "Studies for Movement" (1906) reproduced in Craig on Theatre, edited by J. Michael Wilson (192pp. Methuen, £12.50, £4.95 paperback, 0 413 49540 X), to be published on October 6.

## Seventy-five years on Swinburne's Shakespeare

The TLS of September 24, 1908, carried the following review of Swinburne's *The Age of Shakespeare*: "Mr. Swinburne is the last of the romantic poets and the last of the romantic critics. He was born seventy years ago, but his mind seems at least a generation wide, although it has none of the decrepitude of age. And it seems odd to his criticism that his poetry is still novel. But as a critic he has no home of eternal youth, and his criticism seems to come to us from that remote past when the romantics were discovering their Elizabethan ancestors. We may not know the Elizabethans as well as Mr. Swinburne — no one probably ever has known them so well. But we are more used to them. He has never got used to them, but all his life has been in the state of mind with regard to them that Keats expressed in his sonnet

upon Chapman's Homer: 'It is the chief weakness of romantic poets and critics alike that they think too little of conception and design. The poets are apt to lose themselves in episodes, the critics to judge a work by its episodes.' Mr. Swinburne, whose longer poems are nearly all made up of episodes, whose plays are all spectacles, and whose *Trillem* is a string of lyrical descriptions, has the greatest power because of their splendid episodes. Of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* he says: 'Few masterpieces of any age in any language can stand beside this tragic poem — it has hardly the structure of a play — for the qualities of terror and splendour, for intensity of purpose and sublimity of note.' And then he goes on to speak, as well he may, of the beauty of the vision of *Dr Faustus*. But *Dr Faustus* was meant to be a play, and it must be a grave defect in a

work meant to be a play that it should not have the structure of a play; for that means, either that the conception is not dramatic, or that it does not dominate the design. The conception of *Dr Faustus* was dramatic, but the design was not. The colours are bluish, metallic grey, green — far removed, in Waide's words, from 'la soue chaude que j'appelle le style Eastmanian'. The speeches are authentic, but the dialogue modern French. Visual and aural props are chosen not to entertain or to involve unthinkingly but in order to convey concepts. This film is a meta-discourse, like poetry, that uses, transforms, and fuses other discourses within its own system of conventions. *Dr Faustus* can be construed as conventional. In fact, however, Waide ceases to define convention. His treatment of character is complex. A member of Solidarity, Waide feels that an epoch, past or present, can only be

## Decisions and vacillations

Margaret Higonnet

Danton  
Chelsea Cinema

Andrzej Wajda's *Danton* is set in Paris between March 25 and April 5, 1794. The week before, Robespierre and the mainstream bourgeois Jacobins in the Committee of Public Safety have ordered the execution of the more egalitarian popular revolutionaries who wanted to push the Revolution further to the left. Now, the CPS debate the death of the sated "Dantonists" on the right who think that the Terror has reached its limit. The action unfolds in a handful of interior scenes, where the decisions that lead to Danton's fall and death are made: the Convention Hall, Robespierre's apartment, a printing shop ransacked on order of the CPS, an imagined "Café Rose" where Robespierre and Danton meet, a jail, the Revolutionary tribunal. This political geography, which suggests the isolation of the leadership from the city and its people, is framed by two exterior scenes, Danton's arrival in the Place de la Concorde, the stations of his cross being made to include Notre-Dame which, as it happens, is to the east and not the west of the Conciergerie.

Unlike Daniel Vigne's *Le Retour de Marin Guerre* or the Taviani brothers' *La Notte di San Lorenzo*, which layer perspectives upon a single question of identity or a finite event, *Danton*'s linear narrative and relatively transparent camerawork immerse us in a process whose causality, meaning and moral value remain open. Even symbolic scenes (such as the beating of a child by Robespierre's housekeeper for failing to recite correctly the Declaration of the Rights of Man) do not function as disruptive devices. Wajda's narrative strategy invites a popular audience but also provokes reflection. The contrast between a flamboyant but fatally sluggish Danton and a reflective Robespierre serves to project the audience's choice between experiencing these historical events passively or actively. Wajda purposefully distances his audience from the film by his choice of actors ("un acteur d'un côté, des images documentaires de l'autre") in Paris (or London and New York) the spectator's problem is to reach the historical Danton behind Gérard Depardieu's blustering. The relationship is inverted in Warsaw, where Wojciech Pżeczniak for years starred in a minor Polish classic, *Przysiężka* *L'Affaire Danton*. Wajda gives some of his actors much leeway. Inspired serendipity is part of his romantic method. Pżeczniak carries his theatrical experience over as he wishes. Conversely, Louise Danton's role, originally very broad, was drastically edited after the rushes.

Representation is selection, and Wajda's stated aim was to show a "fragment" of the French Revolution. Danton's sexual life, the war, death are left out. This is a political film whose subject is not Danton's personal mores or the social history of the French Revolution but ideology and the logic of the revolutionary process. Which is Wajda's goal: to make problematical Danton's role, his mix of visual immediacy with deliberate unreality. There are no analogues here to the character scenes of *Morty Guerre*. The colours are bluish, metallic grey, green — far removed, in Waide's words, from 'la soue chaude que j'appelle le style Eastmanian'. The speeches are authentic, but the dialogue modern French. Visual and aural props are chosen not to entertain or to involve unthinkingly but in order to convey concepts. This film is a meta-discourse, like poetry, that uses, transforms, and fuses other discourses within its own system of conventions. *Danton* can be construed as conventional. In fact, however, Waide ceases to define convention. His treatment of character is complex. A member of Solidarity, Waide feels that an epoch, past or present, can only be

understood through action in individuals. Disillusioned, he also feels that the influence of men on history is very limited. Having set his individuals at the centre of his film, Wajda then disrupts our notions of how characters affect events. In place of unified motivation, we find vacillation and psychological discontinuity. An instinctual Danton waffles as the Revolution lurches forward and the CPS prepares to kill him. Appalled by the progress of the revolution that he has himself furthered, Robespierre pulls a shroud-like sheet over his face. Neither one understands events which each has shaped. Foucault and others have decried these ambiguities as incoherence, and in truth secondary characters like Desmoulins, Fouchier Tiville have been excellently portrayed by Patrice Chéreau and Roger Planchon but because they are more easily accessible, Wajda's purpose clearly is to interview characters who are *lisible* with an essentially *scriptible* and *usable* political context. His political film is not a historical travesty where the present wears the clothes of the past; the name of universally valid clichés unchanging human nature. Wajda presents us with an infinite range where the spectator construes his own history — and play it out as he wishes. *Danton*, like history itself, presents interpretation by its implied disjunctions, collisions and abysses.

Commissioned by the French government, *Danton* has been the scandal of the arts calendar for 1983. Giscardien ministers have praised his work. Socialists have carefully ignored it. Communists overtly despise it. Much has been made of the analogies that it supposedly draws between 1794 and the Stalinist purge trials of the 1930s, and even more of those to contemporary Poland. But these analogies founder if we consider Wajda's aesthetic purpose and his Sisyphusian politics: the absence of the crowd, which has irritated leftist reviewers, is in itself a leftist political statement. Both Robespierre and Danton claim to speak for the people, but when the film begins, the Hébertists and Enragés are already dead. Revolutions are at once necessary and exclusive, inevitable and fortuitous; as is the narrative strategy of this film. *Danton* is a better film than where the French Revolution is too present a force for spectators to be at ease with Wajda's distancing intent.

The Chelsea Cinema is the largest Odeon, 203 King's Road, London, SW3.

## Transgressions

Jane Grayson

PRODOR DOSTOEVSKY  
Crime and Punishment  
Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith

The Taganka is just about the hardest theatre to get tickets for in Moscow. Since it opened in 1964 with Yuri Lyubimov as director it has acquired a reputation on the legitimate stage as the repository for the most outlandish avant-garde traditions of Meyerhold and Brecht. The staging of *Hamlet* in the 1970s was dominated by a large arras and showed Hamlet (played by the popular *chansonnier*, Yury Soloviyev) strumming a guitar and singing the poem "Hamlet" from Pasternak's banned novel *Doctor Zhivago*. At present the dramatization of Bulgakov's satirical novel *The Master and Margarita* is a sell-out. By no means all the Taganka's productions have been so politically bold, but the Moscow audience has such acute political hearing that with a little connivance the most seemingly innocuous remark can emerge with import.

It is his choice of *Crime and Punishment* for his Western theatrical debut which Lyubimov has presumably been guided by considerations of suitability, though the London stage-goer whose Dostoevsky is a *fait accompli* should perhaps be dismayed that he has a hard evening ahead of him. This adaptation gives the narrative paces. It is at least in English, however, and Lyubimov has followed some safe advice on the part of his British regional accents to be put for characterization: Irish for the workers, north country for the middle-class, educated Scots for the money detective, and so on — but the system text in this production is a visual and auditory experience rather than necessary subtleties of language. The production is a crude and compelling and of another kind. Spotlights search out and interrogate actor and audience, strobeoscopic flashings and lighting electronic soundtracks speak in language of nightmare. And a black-outlined door, which is the doorway to the underworld, is the doorway to the stage, serving now as doorway, now death-bed, now bier, now stage for a Dracula-like descent into the tomb.

It was interesting that at the end of the performance I attended it was the police inspector, Porfirii Petrovich, and not Raskolnikov (played by Penelope) who was given the larger hand. This was not, it seems to me, a correct response to Lyubimov's direction, which sets out to

alienate our sympathies completely from this murderer whose cast is schooled somewhat irritatingly to call Raskolnikov. The promptings of sympathy, which co-exist with the rebelliousness and the bile in Dostoevsky's mixed-up hero are consistently underplayed or suppressed in this interpretation. In the pub scene early on, for instance, Lyubimov's Raskolnikov listens to the drunken Marmeladov's outpourings with a bored sneer and reacts to the vision of the Last Judgment with a cynical "Suppose nothing like that happens up there." This is not in Dostoevsky. Later, in his handling of the confession scene, Lyubimov does not stint the melodrama, but he takes away the tenderness. On stage Raskolnikov recoils from the cross Sonya holds out to him with exaggerated aversion. In the book, Raskolnikov does not take the cross either, but he adds "Not now, Sonya; better later, so as not to upset her."

This unrelieved black portrayal makes it a little hard to believe in Raskolnikov's eventual acceptance of the truth of Christ in Siberia. Lyubimov, indeed, may think the conversion implausible and, if so, he would certainly not be alone among Dostoevsky's critics. But it is clearly no part of his intention to underplay the religious aspect of Dostoevsky's writing. Quite the contrary. It demands only a little effort of imagination to appreciate the impact that Sonya's impassioned profession of faith and the music from the Russian Orthodox liturgy must have on a Soviet audience. Moreover, Lyubimov does show the moment of conversion, when three candles are lit and the dead rise up. However, this is not the final image which he wants to fix in his audience's imagination. Svidrigilov, Raskolnikov's evil genius, steps forward and snuffs out the candles, repeating a line we have heard earlier about one evil deed being wiped out by a hundred good deeds. And Raskolnikov produces a red exercise book and reads out from a Soviet schoolboy's essay: "Raskolnikov was right to kill the old woman. Too bad he got caught."

Lyubimov's intention, then, is to give us a corrective to a crude Marxist reading which sees Raskolnikov's murder of the money-lender as conditioned by a corrupt capitalist society. The Russians have an expression for this: "peregribat palku" — "to bend the stick back too far". I left the theatre feeling neither roused, nor chastened, just a little disappointed that all the energy and manifest intent of this production had been employed not in building something live and new, but in clearing away the dead wood of a worn-out conception.

## Regiment of women

Simon Berry

ARISTOPHANES

Women in Power

Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh

General Gathering is the sister company of 7.84 Scotland and this adaptation of two Aristophanes plays (*The Assemblywomen* and *The Knights*) by John McGrath is their debut. The setting is Athens in the wake of the civil war, with the restoration of democracy and also the continuing war with Sparta. In these cautious times every attempt is made to preserve the status quo, but then Athenian womanhood decides to take the reins of power. Aristophanes devises a plot whereby a band of women pack the debating chamber of the Assembly and win the vote. The package of reforms they introduce includes common ownership of wealth, wives and children, the abolition of brothels and some experiments in communal living — all proposals mentioned by Plato in *The Republic*.

Thus far Aristophanes. McGrath decides to expand the role of the Greek chorus (the *Assemblywomen*) and has

## Physical jerks

Ronald Hayman

HOWARD BRENTON

The Genius  
Royal Court Theatre

When Brecht wanted to write a play about Einstein, he consulted the physicist Leopold Infeld, who discouraged him: "Einstein is no good for a play. He has no partner. With whom do you want to make him talk?" If Brecht had refused to be dissuaded, the play would no doubt have castigated Einstein, as Galileo had already been castigated for "crippling science" by "piling up knowledge for knowledge's sake." Scientists, said Brecht, should have evolved something like the Hippocratic oath: "a covenant to devote their knowledge exclusively to the good of mankind." Instead, both Galileo and Einstein had, in Brecht's view, helped to push mankind towards Hiroshima.

Howard Brenton, patently influenced by the work he did in preparing Brecht's *Galileo* for the National Theatre, centres his new play on an American mathematician, a Nobel Prize winner who is terrified by the knowledge that his discoveries can be used by nuclear physicists and warmongering politicians. He chooses silence, and we see him exiled to a third-rate English university with a contract that exempts him from teaching; but this does not absolve Brenton from the need to make him speak. Sometimes he just speaks straight out to the audience, but he is also provided by the plot with an assortment of partners.

The first partnership is a sexual one: he has a passionate but brief affair with the wife of the Bursar. He then enters into a less physical but more committed liaison with a girl who is a mathematician, a girl who has happened to be a genius. She stays at the university over the Christmas holidays, partly to spite her mother, partly to write formulas in the ice with the magic marker concealed in the tip of her umbrella, and her irresistible brilliance lures the American into reneging on his decision to do no teaching. The first private lesson comes across like a variation on Galileo's lesson to the young Andrea del Sarto about the movement of the earth around the sun, while the conversion of a principal female character from political apathy to activism repeats the pattern that occurs in so many of Brecht's plays. The girl collaborates with her mentor in transforming a garden party into a turf-cave about nuclear warfare, and in the end she takes part in a peace

demonstration at an air base, after pushing her mathematical findings through the letter-box of the Soviet embassy.

As in so many other plays by Howard Brenton (and Howard Barker) Britain is presented as a covertly totalitarian country in which universities are seedbeds of corruption, while the alumni of public schools work for the government as torturers and spies. The passion in the writing is genuine, but it makes for bad drama: lacking in what Keats called negative capability, Brenton reduces his characters to illustrations, obliging the actors to accept political conviction as a substitute for belief in the behaviour they must simulate. As the Bursar and his wife, Hugh Fraser and Anna Nygh have to cope with long roles which whisk them embarrassingly between caricature and suffering.

Visually, Danny Boyle's production is imaginative and successful, but it makes the small stage look bigger than it is, unfurling soft fabrics to produce stylized suggestions of snow on the ground or greenery on the trees. But he is less successful in directing the actors. Instead of playing against the hysteria in the writing by restraining their emotionality, he keeps them on a loose rein. Agonized yell is all too often answered by agonized yell, while, as the American, Trevor Eve hurls himself athletically into a series of spectacular postures, clutching his brow and retracting his limbs as if yearning for the safety of the womb, or whirling about like a seismograph.

Joanne Whalley wrestles valiantly with the problems posed by the characterization of the young mathematician, but no one could give the ring of truth to something conceived so schematically and unrealistically. Neither she nor Trevor Eve seems capable of high-powered mental activity, such as the dialogue "Implication of the word 'implication' is too obvious" fuelled by generalized indignation about social injustice and nuclear myopia. The playwright could retort that the survival of humanity is more important than any details of individual psychosis or interpersonal relationships. But if the main purpose is debate, it is hard to escape from old-fashioned Shavian scenes of argument, even if you introduce shock effects like the urine sequence: infallibly it makes an impact if a girl, made up to look as though she's suffering from third-degree burns, stands with glasses of yellow liquid on a tray, while a boy chokes, splutters and tries to puke. But the theatre and the talk are inadequately welded together, and though the first half of the play is seldom boring, the second makes the evening too long.

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## Oxford University Press







# The roots of regeneration

Colin Lucas

## NORMAN HAMPTON

*Will and Circumstance: Montesquieu, Rousseau and the French Revolution*  
282pp. Duckworth. £19.50.  
0 7156 1697 8

Norman Hampton's most recent book must surely confirm his reputation as not merely one of the most prolific of contemporary historians of the Revolution but also one of the most original, clear-sighted and influential. It is a long way from his earliest writing on the French republic to this study of what some revolutionaries owed to Montesquieu and Rousseau. But it is the logical outcome of his increasing concern with the mental world of the revolutionaries. This concern began, perhaps, in his study of the Enlightenment, became apparent in his book *The First European Revolution* (whose emphasis was significantly different from his earlier history of the period) and was further refined in short essays on the nationalization of honour and on the Artois nobility, and above all in his studies of Robespierre and Danton.

*Will and Circumstance* marks a significant step in Hampton's perception of the Revolution. At the same time, it is also a significant reflection of a more general evolution in his historiography. Of course, the Revolution has always been a house with many mansions. Yet, the orthodoxy that the only respectable historical preoccupation was with a titanic struggle of social forces, where ideas were only noteworthy as expressions of social conflict, has recently been losing primacy. Historians such as François Furet, Patrice Higonnet, Robert Darnton, Keith Baker and now Hampton himself have been re-evaluating the autonomy of the revolutionaries' ideas, studying what they thought they were trying to do, and renewing the vision of the Revolution as a political event. This can only reinvigorate our sense of its true nature as a glorious endeavour to achieve human ideals even if, as in the title and subject of this book, the contradictions of will and circumstance uncover some pretty horrifying implications of those ideals and even if in revolution human

ambitions and weaknesses generate tyrants and victims.

No one would dispute Hampton's identification of Montesquieu and Rousseau as the greatest eighteenth-century influences in the intellectual apprenticeship of the revolutionaries. These are the philosophers most frequently invoked and quoted. This book explores their influence by analysing the thought of five figures: Mercier, Brissot, Marat, Robespierre and Saint-Just. Of these, Mercier is the most surprising inclusion, since he had neither career nor influence to speak of during the Revolution. It seems a slightly artificial justification to argue that he alone had met both philosophers. Yet, in some senses, Mercier may be more typical of his generation, with all his confusions and his lack of pretension to being an out-and-out ideologist.

It is not the least merit of *Will and Circumstance* that it analyses separately the thought of these men (with the exception of Saint-Just who was too young) before and during the Revolution, so emphasizing that the intellectual apprenticeship of the revolutionaries was accomplished for the great majority before 1789, and that subsequent events acted upon, refined and modified a magma of pre-existing ideas. Of course, the thought of both Montesquieu and Rousseau was often internally contradictory as well as being mutually contradictory; there is, however, little sign that the revolutionaries were much aware of such incompatibilities or inconsistencies, and they borrowed liberally from both. Indeed, it is a little difficult to discern which is the real Brissot or Robespierre or Marat or Mercier before 1789, since they do not so much change their minds as tailor their borrowings to fit whatever pose suited the particular circumstances.

After reading this book, one cannot retain without qualification old clichés about Montesquieu the philosopher of the Right and Rousseau the inspirer of the Left during the Revolution. A man like Brissot, for example, never really chose between them. Furthermore, consistent temperamental reflexes had as much to do with the evolution of ideas as anything. Robespierre was always instinctively a moral crusader who was bound to envisage politics as public morality. Marat's unremitting suspicion of those in power and his

legitimation of the violence of the people were well attuned to the paranoia and belief that he alone was right about everything that he had manifested before 1789. Among these revolutionaries, only Robespierre and Saint-Just seem to have been real Rousseauists by the end. It is perhaps significant that they were the latest in time to discover Rousseau - Saint-Just only becoming a convert during the Terror.

None the less, the evolution of Robespierre and Saint-Just, together with an increasing emphasis on Rousseauism by the more eclectic Brissot, points to Hampton's central thesis. Whether the revolutionaries spotted it or not, there was an essential difference between Montesquieu and Rousseau, encapsulated in the difference between the former's *esprit général* and the latter's *volonté générale*. For Montesquieu, all aspects of a society were organically related and thus fashioned its *esprit général*. Subject only to the moral imperatives of justice and liberty, the legislator could not legislate against it and could only seek a constitutional pluralism that produced an equilibrium of competing interests. For Rousseau, the self-interest of a nation was expressed in its *volonté générale*, which enshrined what was best for the community as a whole. Competing interests dissolved into the general will. Thus, whereas for Montesquieu political institutions embodied a pre-existing general spirit, for Rousseau their object was ultimately to transform the individual into one part of a greater whole. Rousseau's public good stood outside and against sectional interests; Montesquieu's contained them. Their concepts of virtue were antithetical at root.

As Hampton notes, during the heady summer of 1789 it was briefly possible to believe that liberty Montesquieu and Rousseau were right. One could believe that liberty had regenerated the French nation so that sectional interests did not compete and all men did in fact want what they ought to want. Thus, the general spirit was the general will. "Beaux moments, qu'étes-vous devenus?" later lamented Bailly. Yes, indeed. The reality of contradictory sectional interests rapidly rendered the fiction untenable.

Henceforth, the crucial questions could only be about where the general

will was located, what liberty really consisted in, what virtue was and how one defined the people. To all these questions, it was Rousseau who provided the answers, for radicals at least. It was Rousseau who taught that wealth implied corruption and that the people defined as poor were a relatively uncorrupted repository of social virtue. It was Rousseau who taught that politics was an instrument for social regeneration and that as long as the government acted for the public good, it could not infringe liberty. It was Rousseau who taught that the "republic" as an ideal society could be created by the legislator's will. Above all, it was Rousseau who taught that since the general will was infallible, it must be unanimous and hence that there could be no legitimate opposition to whomsoever possessed it. As Robespierre put it to say: "Whoever does not hate crime cannot love virtue." This was to lead him increasingly down the road of the dictatorship of the just; and the just were necessarily self-defining. In all of this, Brissot was no different from Robespierre. In one of the most telling sections of the book, Hampton juxtaposes quotations from both men which essentially say the same thing in analogous circumstances. By mid-1792, power not principles separated Brissot and Robespierre, if not the Girondins and the Montagnards as a whole.

Hampton is careful to state that he is not writing anything more than a study of the impact of Montesquieu and Rousseau upon five specified individuals. One should not therefore charge him with not doing what he did not set out to do. None the less, who better than he to elaborate further? After all, the figures whom he has chosen, with the exception of the politically null Mercier, were all radicals. How representative were they? What did other men of this generation make of their intellectual heritage, especially men like Mounier or Barnave, both of whom left a corpus of writings? Did Danton and Desmoulins find something different in Montesquieu and Rousseau, or was it just power that was at issue between them and the triumvir? What did the Thermidoreans, especially the ex-Montagnards among them, do with all this or did they just give up Rousseau and Montesquieu as a bad job?

One suspects that for many less high-

flown legislators the classical mode was just as important. Even Marat called for a dictator was essentially a Roman republican reference - an allusion indeed to Cincinnatus, whose civic devotion and rustic simplicity made him one of the revolutionaries most invoked epitomes of the virtuous natural man. The Praetorian marshes were consciously modelling themselves on the Stoic rather than the Rousseauist legislator. This generation was imbued with what Mallet du Pan called "all the rubbish of a college republican". It was a republicanism called from school studies of Salustius, Cicero, Tacitus and Plutarch, these nostalgic writers who looked back to ideal republican past whose virtues were exaggerated to emphasize the depravity of the present regime and the virtue morality of leaner, fitter days.

What a soil this was in which to grow dreams and action, especially when fertilized in the 1780s by the new fever of sensibility which seized this generation. For Marat, who believed that justice was a product of sensibility as much as of reason; for Barnave, who lost himself in Werther and Stendhal; Fabre d'Églantine, who complained endlessly of "spiteful" for Saint-Just who wept with "republican fever"; Vergniaud, who purchased flowers to reverse on leaving the Convention; all of these, the Revolution was an exalted odyssey in the regeneration of man through a complex compound of the promptings of the human heart and the imitation of a long gone, mythical society.

Certainly, Rousseau's revolutionary influence was due to the appropriateness of his formulation to the revolutionary circumstance, not was enhanced by the magic of his pen. But it was also due to his ability to put on all these registers. If he did not say you with *Du Contrat Social* or the *Confessions*.

"Beaux moments, qu'étes-vous devenus?" Let us hope that Norman Hampton will continue as indecisively as he has begun to tell us both how the revolutionary generation thought and how he found the paradise of human harmony and what it thought when it found that it had not.

theory. It is perfectly possible that a refined version of the concept of a "second industrial revolution" would be useful. The theory of proto-industrialization was in fact first formulated in 1972, not by Kriedte but by Franklin F. Mendels. It seemed to Mendels to describe the remarkable form of economic development he discovered in eighteenth-century Flanders, soon to be part of the "second industrial nation" (Belgium). Kriedte and his colleagues at the Max-Planck-Institut at Göttingen have attempted to apply the Flanders model to other areas, but in this they have not been entirely successful. Although there seems to be general agreement that rural domestic industry did develop according to the theory in many other parts of north-western Europe (although not all of the 'social preconditions' are to be found even there), elsewhere we find too many different agrarian and social contexts for a uniform explanation. Some areas experienced proto-industrialization but did not industrialize; others industrialized, apparently without widespread rural domestic industry preparing the way. A general survey covering the whole of Europe and three centuries in less than 200 pages is thus premature.

This is not to say that the model is wrong, only that it needs further testing in concrete historical situations. We urgently need local studies of north-western regions away from the continental core, whether or not a successful transition to industrial society followed, in order to redefine, if necessary, reformulate, the general

## Julian Baldick

*LOUIS MASSIGNON*  
*The Passion of al-Hallaj, Mystic and Martyr of Islam*  
Translated by Herbert Mason  
Pp. 645, 493, 360 and 294pp.  
Princeton University Press. £108 the set.  
0 691 0910 3

This is a very great book, by France's most famous Islamic specialist in this century, who was also a leading Catholic intellectual. It combines extraordinary erudition with extremely lucid thought in a considerable variety of disciplines. The main thesis, however, would appear to be wrong.

Mas'ud al-Hallaj, the best-known martyr of Sufism, Islam's main esoteric movement, was executed in Baghdad in 922. A few fragments of his work survive, along with a number of prayers, verses, maxims and quotations attributed to him. The reconstruction of his life is highly problematic, given the anecdotal and biographical nature of the sources.

Louis Massignon (1883-1962) published the first edition of his work on Hallaj in 1922. A pioneer in the field, he had read and absorbed an absolutely astonishing amount of material, and the result made his reputation. The second edition, published posthumously in 1975, incorporates a lifetime's research.

Herbert Mason has prefaced his translation with a valuable and candid preface. He judges Massignon's personality to be a very integrated one. His own works and published letters, however, reveal a deeply divided

mind. I see in Massignon two opposing personalities: on the one hand a highly critical and rigorous scholar, and on the other a religious figure filled with all the naive credulity and contempt for serious historical research that characterized the French Catholic revival at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the first edition, which represented a doctoral dissertation, the irrational side was largely restrained; in the second edition it rises to the fore in passages which overshadow the laborious but brilliant technical expositions.

Massignon's main thesis is that Hallaj deliberately suffered and died as a "substitute saint" for the Muslim community, in order to ransom its members from punishment. In propounding this thesis he confuses the idea of "mystical substitution" in the writings of J. K. Huysmans, for whom its primary meaning was suffering in order to redeem the sins of others, with the Islamic concept of the *abdal*, literally "substitutes", a term which designates blessed men who are substituted for the Prophets and for each other from one generation to the next. Huysmans also has the idea of people being "substituted" for preceding figures, but in the Islamic context the idea of suffering to redeem sinners is simply not there. (Cf. the criticisms levelled by Islamic specialists at André Schwarz-Bart's *Le dernier des justes*, for introducing the Christian theme of privileged suffering and sacrifice to stone for others into the Jewish tradition of the "36 Just Men".)

The use of the word "saint" in the study of Islamic mysticism is also an error, and a common and most misleading one: the concept does not exist in Islam, and the expression usually so translated, *wali Allah*, means "friend of God": Massignon

makes things much worse by presenting Hallaj as teaching a doctrine of "sainthood" and putting it into practice.

Volume 1 ("Life") contains a new preface, in which Massignon says: "My 1922 preface did not specify the working hypotheses actually underlying the initial plan; the present clarification sets them forth in the manner of a methodology of the history of religion." He then produces a philosophy of history, in which the "substitute saints" have pride of place, before rejecting the "rules of prudence of historiographical criticism". The state of the 1922 text, and his letters to Claudel, suggest that what really happened in the preparation of the first edition was that Massignon, overwhelmed by the vast amount of materials which he had collected, hurriedly thrust them into order as best he could, as many other doctoral candidates have done since. His famous "sympathetic method" is largely a myth.

The biography itself, in the second edition, is infinitely better than the preface would lead one to expect. The relations of the sources to each other are explored with the most searching severity, and the anecdotes are usually treated with a welcome scepticism. One problem here is posed by Massignon's belief that Hallaj worked miracles - with supernatural intervention. It seems to me that the evidence does in fact indicate that Hallaj was producing vivid illusions by hypnosis. Another problem concerns the saying for which Hallaj is famous: "I am the Truth". Massignon, after a devastating analysis which almost annihilates the evidence that Hallaj did say this, comes to the conclusion that he must have said it.

This volume contains a rich evocation of medieval Baghdad, in which social, economic and political surveys are used to form the background to Hallaj's preaching and trials. Massignon reveals himself as skilled in every conceivable branch of study, from demography to astrology. In a masterly preparation for his dramatic reconstruction. But here one notices his invention of the existence of craft guilds in early Islam (exposed in *The Islamic City*, edited by A. H. Hourani and S. M. Stern, 1970). One must also, with regard to the book's central argument, question Massignon's use of what would normally be dismissed as apocryphal utterances in which Hallaj calls on his fellow Muslims to kill him, as a religious duty for which they will be rewarded. It seems to be straining the sources in a Christian direction to take this as evidence for a desire for a sacrifice which will itself produce the salvation of the Muslim community. This preoccupation leads Massignon to a quite amazing attempt, using very late sources, to interpolate a celebrated verse into an early account: "Kill me, O my trustworthy friends, for to kill me is to make me live."

Volume Two ("Survival"), which is also recast and greatly expanded from the first edition, examines the treatment of Hallaj in Islamic tradition, doctrine and poetry. It covers the whole area of the Muslim world from Morocco to Indonesia, and the entire range of Arabic, Persian and Turkish literature. That this should be done at all illustrates the prodigious gifts of the author. One feels, however, that the project was too ambitious even for a man of his powers: the technical problems of chronology and authenticity in many of the materials were bound to be too much for someone who was not a specialist in all the fields involved.

What is paradoxical here is Massignon's hostility to Shi'ism, the sect of Islam characterized by its extreme veneration for Muhammad's family, and its allegiance to infallible leaders - a sect whose spirituality has obvious similarities to that of Catholicism. But Massignon's hostility is explained by his belief that some Shi'ites were responsible for Hallaj's execution; by their condemnation of him, and also, it would seem, by resemblances between other Shi'ites and freemasons or communists. Shi'ism, however, is not the only aspect of Islam for which Massignon lacked

sympathy: he evinces considerable distaste for a large amount of Islamic literature and thought, in particular the pederastic conventions of Sufi poetry and the late medieval systematization of mystical doctrine.

Volume Three ("Teaching") presents the text of the first edition, with numerous insertions. It covers the entire spectrum and subject-matter of early Islamic theology, in order to situate Hallaj's doctrines and use of technical terms in the context of the warring sects around him. In the hands of anyone but Massignon Muslim dogmatic theology would stand a strong chance of sounding somewhat dull. The breath-taking rapidity with which he leaps from one point or position to another, and the acuity with which he identifies crucial philosophical questions in the tangle of interminable pedantry, tend to absorb the reader to the point of forgetting Hallaj himself. The translations of Hallaj's fragments at the end of this volume are highly speculative; the textual and terminological problems are still a long way from solution.

Massignon says that his model for his doctrinal section was von Hugel's study of Catherine of Genoa. In a letter of 1909 he describes this as being "d'une intelligence mystique et d'une inutile crudité invraisemblables! Tout y est mêlé, confondu, sans discrimination hiérarchique." His own work is really very different, and one wonders why he described himself as following an example so admittedly inauspicious. His sincerity is beyond question: this must be taken as further evidence of a lasting dilemma.

As for Hallaj, he remains an enigma. But the book tells us a lot about Massignon, who is certainly an important object of study in his own right. His life was strongly marked by the role which he assigned to Hallaj in his mysterious "conversion" experience of 1908. The work shows Massignon's inner struggle, between the sceptic and the believer, corresponding very closely to the conflict between poets of French society and mystics. The second edition reflects a radical change in his character: from the French Government's official emissary to its outspoken opponent, offering himself up to the violence of his compatriots in his courageous stand on behalf of Algerian independence. It was surely there, rather than in his academic labours, that he was to find his truest self-fulfilment.

## Ready for take-off

Geoffrey Parker

*PETER KRIEDTE*  
*Peasants, Landlords and Merchant Capitalists: Europe and the World Economy, 1500-1800*  
Translated by V. R. Berghahn  
191pp. Berg Publishers Ltd, 24, Binswood Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 5SQ. £14 (paperback, £4.95).  
0 90 7582 07 9

No one could accuse Peter Kriedte of providing an easy read. Obscurity darkens his prose from the beginning to the end. On page 10, we are asked to understand that "Peasants and merchant capital found themselves in a very delicate relationship, externally with the feudal mode of production, and internally with the capitalist mode of production". On page 101 we are offered a graph entitled "Volume of oxen draft over land in Prussia and the Netherlands, 1491-1700" (and the number of oxen so drafted was considerable, up to 40,000 a year!) On page 160 we learn that "The French Revolution accelerated this transformation process, but without reaching the final stage". Finally, on page 161, we find that "Proto-industrialization, in the eighteenth century, and the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century, and the twenty-first century, and the twenty-second century, and the twenty-third century, and the twenty-fourth century, and the twenty-fifth century, and the twenty-sixth century, and the twenty-seventh century, and the twenty-eighth century, and the twenty-ninth century, and the thirtieth century, and the thirty-first century, and the thirty-second century, and the thirty-third century, and the thirty-fourth century, and the thirty-fifth century, and the thirty-sixth century, and the thirty-seventh century, and the thirty-eighth century, and the thirty-ninth century, and the fortieth century, and the forty-first century, and the forty-second century, and the forty-third century, and the forty-fourth century, and the forty-fifth century, and the forty-sixth century, and the forty-seventh century, and the forty-eighth century, and the 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## Tales out of school

Phyllis Grosskurth

LILLIAN FADERMAN

Scotch Verdict  
320pp. New York: Morrow. \$17.50.  
0 688 01559

1811 was a vintage year for the gossips of Edinburgh. Late in 1810, Lady Cumming Gordon of Gordonstown suddenly removed her granddaughter from the boarding-school of the Misses Jane Pirie and Marianne Woods, advising the parents of all the other girls there to do likewise. No explanation was given. The schoolmistresses immediately filed a libel action against Lady Cumming Gordon for destroying their reputations and their livelihood by veiled hints of wrong-doing to which they were given no opportunity to reply.

The American feminist, Lillian Faderman, became intrigued by the case, especially because as a child she had played the informer in Lillian Hellman's play, *The Children's Hour*, which is a contemporary version of this nineteenth-century case. In the summer of 1982, accompanied by her friend Ollie, Ms Faderman went to Edinburgh, to read the large numbers of documents on the trial. What she has done in *Scotch Verdict* is to breathe life into an episode that was bizarre, tragic, and ultimately unknowable. She traces the extraordinary series of events, interspersing them with speculative discussions between herself and Ollie as to the

temperaments of the protagonists, what actually took place, the predicament of other independent women of the period who tried to earn a living by their wits, and the importance of the current social order. All these aspects of the situation are scrutinized in the light of their own shared life as contemporary lesbians who can lead a relatively emancipated existence.

In initiating a case against Lady Cumming Gordon, the two young schoolmistresses were putting themselves on trial just as much as Oscar Wilde when he sued the Marquess of Queensbury; and in a sense they had far more to lose. There had been two previous cases of transvestism tried in British courts; but this situation set a precedent in that for the first time it raised the spectre that seemingly respectable women could make love to each other.

Pirie and Woods had been friends for several years before deciding to open a school together. Pirie was the more aggressive, Woods the more refined. Trouble erupted from the beginning, when Woods insisted on having her aunt to live with them, even though there was a basic enmity between her friend and the older woman. Consequently there were constant quarrels and loving reconciliations, witnessed by the pupils and servants. Nevertheless, the school got off to a good start through the patronage of Lady Cumming Gordon, who entrusted it with her granddaughter, Jane. Jane was the illegitimate, half-

caste daughter of a son who had died in India; and her grandmother had decided that it was her Christian duty to bring the child to Scotland, although her treatment of the girl seems to have been grudging at best.

On a visit home Jane confided to her grandmother that Miss Pirie, with whom she shared a bed, was often visited at night by Miss Woods, and that they behaved in a lascivious manner of which she provided graphic details. It was a measure of Lady Cumming Gordon's prestige in the community that the other mothers unquestioningly followed suit in withdrawing their own children from the school without the old lady giving any explanation. In court she was judged by her social and political peers, whose characters are skilfully brought to life here through the notes they left on the trial. The wrong-doing which the two women were supposed to have committed was so monstrously difficult to credit that the grand lady won the case by the narrowest of margins. On a subsequent appeal, she lost, by an equally narrow margin. When that decision was ultimately upheld by the House of Lords, Lady Cumming Gordon procrastinated for years before paying the meagre damages.

Ollie and Ms Faderman analyse and disagree about the veracity of the various characters involved. Jane Cumming was a sneak but, as an outcast in a highly stratified world, she could plausibly have embellished the truth in order to be moved to a

school bearing more distinction. She was a manipulative little miss who seems to have persuaded one of her impressionable companions to support her charges.

The book is particularly intriguing in its speculations about what happened to all the women in later life. It is known that Miss Woods and her aunt went to London, where she was able to obtain a teaching job. Lady Cumming Gordon, who had never reckoned on the humiliation of a lawsuit, probably grew crusty and embittered by her decision to befriend her "natural" granddaughter. Ms Faderman and Ollie decide that she is the villain of the piece; and yet was she not so imprisoned in her class that she was unable to see women from another class as fellow human beings? Jane Pirie had to continue living in Edinburgh, and one can imagine the insults to which she was subjected. She became increasingly destitute and undoubtedly eccentric until she disappears from the records without trace. Jane Cumming was probably given a small annuity by her grandmother and sent to some remote spot where she could not embarrass her relatives.

Jane Pirie and Jane Cumming, both still young, had years of loneliness and ostracism ahead of them. And they were not the only people to suffer, as Ms Faderman points out: any other women who were in any way witness to the case would be nervous about ever showing - or feeling - affection for another female. A world of innocence had been destroyed.

## Porridge recipes

Michael Ignatieff

JOY CAMERON

Prisons and Punishment in Scotland from The Middle Ages to the Present  
274pp. Edinburgh: Canongate. £12.95.  
0 86241 031 2

Modern Scotland has the peculiar distinction of having more of a population behind bars than any other nation in Europe. In the mid-1970s at least, according to Joy Cameron's figures, Scottish prisons held 80 inmates for every 100,000 of population, compared to 59.9 inmates in France, 72.4 in England and 83.6 in West Germany. Another author might have pondered on the reasons for this dubious distinction - the long term decline of Scotland's industrial base in coal, steel and ship-building; the traditionally high rates of Scottish unemployment; the poverty of its working class, the long-standing siphoning-off of resource revenue to the South and so on. But instead of thinking hard about the sources of the distinctively patterns of Scottish crime and punishment, Ms Cameron contented herself with quoting a prison officer's glum explanation: "We Scots are a very violent, savage, cunning, difficult people. However much comfort this may give to Scotophobes everywhere, it scarcely counts as a serious thought.

In this, as in other instances, *Prisons and Punishment in Scotland* is long on curious facts and short on explanations. Its focus is invariably parochial and it seems to have been written in nearly complete ignorance of a decade of new work on the social history of prisoners in other societies beyond Scotland's borders. As a result, it never gets to grips with the question of the particularity of the Scottish experience. One would have expected Scottish prisons and their history to have differed markedly from English ones only because of the distinctiveness of the Scottish legal tradition. The author does draw our attention to some of these special features: the survival of the heritable jurisdictions of the barons, well into the eighteenth century; a system of public prosecution, in which a somewhat milder capital code (for instance, ordinary thieving or "pickpocket") was not a capital offence in eighteenth-century Scotland as it was in England; and a distinguished, tightly knit Scottish bar.

In spite of these distinctive features, Scottish prison history seems remarkably similar to the English and in particular no local Scottish movement for the reform of prisons seems to have emerged from the legal and professional elites of Edinburgh or Glasgow police society. Howard, Neld, Curney and Fry - figures who initiated prison reform in late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Scotland - were metropolitan figures. Why this should be so is a puzzle which Ms Cameron leaves unexamined. Likewise, she fails to explain how the centralization of the Scottish prison service under Whitehall control between 1839 and 1877 was reconciled with the separate traditions and procedures of the Scottish legal system. If there is a Scottish element in Scottish prison history, then we ought to be told what it is.

The pages of this book which have the longest were those with pictures of the exultant carriages made by French prisoners-of-war held in the castle of Edinburgh. Castle, prison, the Napoleonic Wars. One prisoner fashioned a replica of his warship from long and eighteen inches high. Every spar, every mast, every bone he found in his soup-dish. Jimmy Boyle's sculptures were in the Barlinnie prison, or they were in the collection of the Scottish Warship in Alcester, which is a monument to his ingenuity in tight pinches.

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## Monarchs in the glen Intellectually aspiring

Caroline Bingham

JEAN GOODMAN WITH SIR IAIN MONCRIEFF OF THAT ILK  
Debrett's Royal Scotland  
224pp. Debrett/Webb and Bower.  
£12.95.  
0 90549 59 1

*Debrett's Royal Scotland* is a lavishly illustrated book with a proportionately short text, the character of which is defined by the title of the first chapter, "Royal Stories in Stones". Successive chapters on "Royal Castles, Palaces and Houses" link each site with anecdotes of Scottish - and later, British - royalty. Jean Goodman has attempted to arrange her selection of royal residences so far as possible in chronological order, "according to the parts they played in terms of their royal associations in the history of Scotland".

This system does not yield readily to the demands of chronology, despite an unbroken link of royal associations stretching from the inaugurations of the Kings of Dalriada on the rock of Dunadd to the Queen Mother's acquisition of the Castle of Mey in Caltonness. Many of the buildings, lovingly evoked and skilfully photographed, have been occupied or visited by so many royal persons that chronology breaks down in a confusion of anecdotes. Scottish history is not the morass of mayhem and disorder envisaged by romantic and dramatic episodes which this history-as-gossip technique implies. It is, however, a collection of royal residences and a collection which might well include a reader of Mrs Goodman's narrative.

The introduction by Sir Iain Moncrieff, that Ilk, claims that the collection has been provided by the monarchy. The history of the foundation and consolidation of Scotland as a very special country with a strong identity of her own, is the story of one continuing royal family. The backbone of the book is Moncrieff's genealogical table, extending from Fergus of Dalriada (c 430 AD) to the birth of Prince William in 1982. It is designed with exemplary clarity and supplied with short summaries of the principal characters' careers; attention is drawn to an underlying rationality in the apparently disorderly of the text.

Though Moncrieff explains that the genealogical table is intended to demonstrate the deep roots and flowing continuity of our royal family,

it is indisputable that the relationship of the ruling dynasty to Scotland was profoundly changed by the Union of Crowns of 1603, which led to the non-residence of the later Stuarts. After the Union of Parliaments of 1707, the continuity of Scottish history owed more to the regenerative power of Scottish culture than to any cohesive influence of the monarchy.

Mrs Goodman passes lightly over the divisive consequences of Jacobitism; and concentrates on the happier period of royal relations with Scotland inaugurated by the reconciliatory visit of George IV in 1822, the first Hanoverian monarch to visit Scotland and the first member of his family to do so since the victor of Culloden. George IV has seldom received anything but contempt for his decision to wear Highland dress, but both Moncrieff and Goodman refuse to join the "standard sniping" at the royal visit as an occasion of farce - though the King's appearance in a kilt over flesh-coloured tights was undeniably bizarre. However, Turner's picture "The March of the Clans" - painted in honour of the occasion, and here reproduced as an illustration - suggests that Sir Walter Scott, who organized its pageantry, possessed the aplomb of a film-director marshalling a cast of thousands. His achievement was all the more remarkable in comparison with contemporary English attempts at royal pageantry, which were notorious for ineptitude and disorder. No wonder George IV said to Scott, with tears in his eyes, "Never King was better received by his people. Never King felt it more."

From this time, writes Mrs Goodman, "relations between England and Scotland never looked back", a controversial statement which appears to receive confirmation from the remainder of her narrative, concerning Queen Victoria's devotion to Balmoral and the continuing affection of the royal family for its Scottish residences. But relations between England and Scotland have been, and remain, more complex than these domestic vignettes suggest.

Carroll's *Royal Scotland* typifies an older, characteristically of books in the Scottish history tradition, intended for a general reader, that reduction of the historical to the picturesque. Thus it perpetuates the myth that lawlessness and romantic savagery flourished unchecked north of the border, while serious history was being made in England. It is a myth which does grave disservice to the equal achievements of the History of Scotland.

James Campbell

GORDON DONALDSON (Editor)  
Four Centuries: Edinburgh  
University Life, 1583-1983  
185pp. University of Edinburgh  
Press. £10.  
0 85224 467 3

"The intellectual horizons of the University, to someone... poor and relatively self-educated, must have seemed boundless." Ian Campbell's suggestion of the young Carlyle's thrill as he arrived (after a three-day walk from home) to take up studies in Edinburgh in 1809, points to the main virtue of a higher education, particularly in Scotland, with its democratic emphasis on intellectual attainment and disregard for most social credentials. Old school ties, where they exist, are taken off at the gate.

Professor Gordon Donaldson's amiable miscellany reveals that, allowing for changes in style, the spirit has prevailed since the establishment of Edinburgh University by the Town Council four centuries ago. He has collected a series of essays by various members of the staff, which explore, in a deliberately free-wheeling manner, teaching methods and aims, social, sexual and racial attitudes, and academic history of the institution during that period. The book is perhaps worth more for its individual parts than as a whole; it confirms the suspicion that most academics need tuition in applying the lighter literary touch; but in the end, the archaism and occasional dull humour add to its charm.

Inevitably, as may be the book's main fault, "Manuscript Sources in the Library and the Life of the University" are less likely to appeal to the old boy or girl with a general interest in local history than, for example, Christine Shepherd's concise and entertaining account of "University life in the seventeenth century." Latin had to be spoken, at all times, in and out of class. Possession of swords and daggers was forbidden. During that century, and the best students had scant access to books, which at first seems quite a drawback for a scholar; but it resulted in a unique form of dictation, in which students' textbooks written in their own hands, with the help of some surviving examples, Jonquil, Bevan and Eric, were the teaching tools of the day.

each essay well-researched and stocked with curious information. Sheila Hamilton rather dutifully records the struggle of the first academic women, who were often forced to spend as much time studying legal matters as their specialist subjects; and James Jennings discusses the matriculation process from "the other side of the counter".

The best essays are those which are most particular. George Shepperson supplies a sympathetic, too brief (two pages of footnotes for four of text) account of some black students in Edinburgh in the last century, providing among the footnotes a contemporary glimpse of one "coloured man in full Scotch costume, a la Rob Roy... dancing with some innocent-looking ruddy-cheeked Scotch lassie".

On an occasion such as this, one would not expect to find much strong criticism of the University's cruder follies. Densy Hay comes closest to it, complaining of pay and the tenure system which has resulted in students knowing even more about it - and now, under the new economic stringency, unable to recruit new staff. But he shies away from too many harsh words on "Edinburgh University's Square, the heart of the University, is the most bitterly resented catastrophe, where some of the city's finest eighteenth-century domestic buildings have been replaced with monstrous towers, one of them named after the principal demolisher, Sir Edward Appleton. Moreover, virtually everything between the square and the Old Quadrangle - an area of half a mile - has been bulldozed, to make way for new buildings which have never materialized. Consequently, part of the campus has resembled a builder's yard for the past ten years. Expansion in a modern university is necessary, of course, but it is shameful that pockets are discovered to be empty only as the bricks are falling.

Not the brightest of Edinburgh University's forty decades, then, but on the whole this book affirms much of what is worth affirming in its tradition and its history. In a city where the gap between town and gown is narrower than in most places, which is it that should be

the Scottish legal tradition. The author does draw our attention to some of these special features: the survival of the heritable jurisdictions of the barons, well into the eighteenth century; a system of public prosecution, in which a somewhat milder capital code (for instance, ordinary thieving or "pickpocket") was not a capital offence in eighteenth-century Scotland as it was in England; and a distinguished, tightly knit Scottish bar.

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Biography and Memoirs

FRANCES DONALDSON. P. G. Wodehouse. 399pp. Macdonald. £9.95. 0 356453 5. 0 First published in 1982 by Wodehouse and Nicolson in 1982 and reviewed in the TLS of November 12 that year.

BENNY GREEN. P. G. Wodehouse. A Literary Biography. 256pp. Oxford University Press. £3.95. 0 19 281390 0. 0 First published in 1981 by Pavilion Books and Michael Joseph and reviewed in the TLS of October 16, 1981.

PIETRI GUGGENHEIM. Out of This Century. Confessions of an Ari Addict. 256pp. André Deutsch. £6.95. 0 233 70601 9. 0 First published in 1979 and reviewed in the TLS of March 14, 1980.

BRYN MARKHAM. West with the Night. 256pp. San Francisco: North Point Press. £12.50. 0 86547 118 5. 0 Ice in the petrol feed of her Percival Gull determined that Beryl Markham's closest solo flight from England across the Atlantic in 1936 should end in a Nova Scotia bog rather than in New York, as planned. The exploit, which made her famous, forms an appropriate climax to *West with the Night*, first published in 1942. Childhood and youth in Kenya in the devil-may-care spirit of the Delamere years, followed by an adventurous spirit which found its outlet first, at the age of eighteen as a racehorse trainer and subsequently as an independent workaholic pilot, delivering cargo, the sick racing as aerial spotter for such white hunters as the legendary Bill, Com Blizzen: all this over territory in which a forced landing might prove fatal. Not the least interesting part of this exciting account of life in a frontier society is Beryl Markham's vivid descriptions of childhood forays with her father's Muriel farm servants which lay close understanding of tribal life and rituals - one boar-hunting expedition would make a modern-day turn pale. Hemingway was enthusiastic about the book - Beryl Markham could, he said, "write rings around all of us who consider ourselves novelists. Not quite, perhaps, but with the allowance made for an air of the literary in some passages, *West with the Night* remains a remarkable creation of a tough minded individualist and of flying's early days.

J.K.L.W.

ELIZ. WOODHAM-SMITH. Florence Nightingale. 615pp. Constable. £7.50. 0 0949103 1. 0 First published in 1950 and reviewed in the TLS of October 6, 1950. The reviewer wrote: "Up to now the only well-known and easily accessible account has been Lytton Strachey's somewhat misleading essay in *Some Victorian Portraits*. Now at last, 130 years after Florence Nightingale's birth, and nearly a century after her death, comes a biography which is at once authoritative, sympathetic, and eminently readable."

Business

NICHOLAS TAMBOR. PASCALS and ANTHONY C. ATHOS. The Art of Japanese Management. 221pp. Penguin. £1.95. 0 14 006104 5. 0 First published in 1982. This book, by two American Business School pundits, takes the reader into the boardrooms of Matsushita and TTT, General Electric and Sony; and, mainly by means of anecdotes, seeks to answer the question: why are the Japanese so successful in the United States in industry?

MIMI HODG. Gunboat Diplomacy 1893-1905. Great Power Prestige in Venezuela. 210pp. George Allen and Unwin. £5.95. 0 04 987002 5. 0 First published in 1975 and reviewed in the TLS of April 16, 1976. In his review Malcolm Deas wrote: "As diplomatic history the book offers the beginnings of a corrective to the suffocatingly Anglo, Euro or gringo-centric views that have prevailed among apologists and critics of the great powers, most of whom have been incapable of leaving their hands on, or reading, the simplest and most accessible texts, or of showing the slightest extra-legalistic insight into the state of affairs prevailing

really getting at to find this book a valuable and entertaining source of information.

P.H.

Classics

RICHARD JENKINS. Three Classical Poets. Sappho, Catullus, and Juvenal. 243pp. Duckworth. £7.95. 0 156 1761 3. 0 First published in 1982 and reviewed in the TLS of July 23, 1982.

E. J. KENNEY and W. V. CLAUSEN (Editors). The Cambridge History of Classical Literature. Volume II. Latin Literature, now published in paperback in five parts: Part I *The Early Republic*. 233pp. £7.50. 0 521 27375 7. Part 2 *The Late Republic*. 153pp. £6.50. 0 521 27374 9. Part 3 *The Age of Augustus*. 239pp. £7.50. 0 521 27373 0. Part 4 *The Early Principate*. 240pp. £7.50. 0 521 27372 2. Part 5 *The Later Principate*. 154pp. £6.50. 0 521 27371 4. 0 First published in 1982 and reviewed in the TLS of September 10, 1982.

MARY R. LEFKOWITZ. The Lives of the Greek Poets. 184pp. Duckworth. £5.95. 0 7156 1721 4. 0 First published in 1981 and reviewed in the TLS of May 21, 1982.

D. A. RUSSELL. Criticism in Antiquity. 219pp. Duckworth. £5.95. 0 7156 1724 9. 0 First published in 1981 and reviewed in the TLS of September 3, 1982.

History

NORBERT ELIAS. The History of Manors. 310pp. Blackwell. £6.95. 0 631 13214 7. 0 First published in German in 1939, and in English in 1978 as the first volume of *The Civilizing Process* which was reviewed in the TLS of September 15, 1978. The second volume, *State Formation and Civilization*, is due to be published in January 1984.

M. I. FINLEY. Economy and Society in Ancient Greece. Edited by Brent D. Shaw and Richard P. Saller. 326pp. Penguin. 0 14 022520 X. 0 First published by Chatto and Windus in 1981. This collection of essays was reviewed in the TLS of July 2, 1982.

ABOTT GLEASON. Young Russia: The Genesis of Russian Radicalism in the 1860s. 288pp. University of Chicago Press. £8.80. 0 226 2961 9. 0 First published by Viking Press in 1980. Gleason takes his title from a radical manifesto circulated by students after the St Petersburg fires of 1862, and the theme of his work is the radicalization of Russian youth in the 1860s. Historical background concerning the relations between the landed gentry and the crown, the role of government in the creation of the universities, the emergence of the intelligentsia and the role of the printed word is deftly drawn. The appeal of figures such as Herzen, Chernyshevsky and the Slavophiles is elaborated in engaging portraits and lively biographical studies of lesser-known characters such as the unconventional Yakushkin (collector of folk tales and wearer of peasant dress) in a central chapter entitled "The Emergence of Populist Style". Throughout, Gleason is concerned with the "feel" of the times, rather than the history of ideas, and his refreshing, rather quizical approach is that of a university professor who has lived through the radicalization of American students in the 1960s.

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Humour

PATRICK MARNHAM. The Private Eye Story. 232pp. Fontana. £4.95. 0 00 636453 5. 0 First published in 1982 by André Deutsch and reviewed in the TLS of February 18, 1983.

## Paperbacks in brief

JAMES THURBER. Let Your Mind Alone. 256pp. Methuen. £3.50. 0 413 53160 0. 0 First published by Hamish Hamilton in 1937, this collection of "more or less inspirational pieces" with drawings by the author was reviewed in the TLS of November 6, 1937. The reviewer wrote: "Mr. Thurber has an astute mind; he clears away a quantity of flappodoo and is extremely funny while doing so, but his humour is a cumulative effect and so is not easily quotable in a small space." The drawing below is reproduced from the book.

FRIEDRICH SCHILLER. On the Aesthetic Education of Man. In a series of letters. 572pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19 815786 X. 0 Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby, the editors and translators of this edition, published originally in 1967 (and reviewed in the TLS of July 11, 1968), are quick to point out that the treatise "has surprisingly little to say about the concrete particulars of art", or on the arts in general. They isolate two issues which form the "double axis" of the treatise: the relation of art to politics. "There can be little doubt that a major obstacle to the appreciation of Schiller's educational theory has been the word 'aesthetic' itself." Some other obstacles are removed by the provision of the best English translation face to face with the German text, together with a detailed textual commentary, and a lengthy introduction in which Schiller's treatise is analysed and set in the appropriate background, its reception and influence traced. Four appendices, two of which treat of the genesis of *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, and of its translations and mistranslations, a glossary, a bibliography and two indexes complete an already substantial and scholarly edition.

A.P.

JAMES MORRIS. Sultan in Oman. 140pp. Century. £4.95. 0 7126 0188 0. 0 In 1955, Britain desperately needed a secure source of oil. It looked as though oil had been found at Fath; in Oman, the question was, did Oman legally fall under the sway of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, whose territories were in the South East corner of the Arabian peninsula? This was disputed by Egypt and Saudi Arabia - who clearly had a good case in law - and the Imam of the local sect of Islam had, with their support, made a bid for the independence of Oman. With an unusually sturdy regard for self-interest Britain stood by the Sultan in his plan to establish his rule in Oman by military force, and for once such tactics paid off. Not a shot was fired by the Sultan's various private armies, and James Morris was able to join him in his triumphant progress from Dhufar to Muscat, making a detour for the erstwhile rebel stronghold of Nizwa, a unique journey across an uncharted desert at high speed in a fleet of modern trucks. Morris's brief record of his impressions (first published by Faber in 1957 and reviewed in the TLS of February 8 that year) is cool and epigrammatic.

Poetry

W. H. AUDEN and PAUL B. TAYLOR. Norse Poems. 256pp. Faber. £4.50. 0 571 13028 3. 0 First published in 1981 and reviewed in the TLS of February 26, 1982.

Literature

FRANK LENTRICCHIA. After the New Criticism. 384pp. Methuen. £7.95. 0 416 36080 7. 0 First published in 1980 by the Athlone Press and reviewed in the TLS of April 17, 1981. The reviewer, Vivien Mercer, wrote that the book is "a tough-minded account of some of the major theoretical preoccupations of literary criticism during the past twenty years. Its anti-idealist commitment, openly presented and tellingly deployed, gives it an attractive bite. The result is a demanding and compelling work, spirited in its definition of a number of questions concerned historical consciousness which any new criticism must be prepared to answer."

PHILIP SHORT. The Dragon and the Bear. Inside China and Russia Today. 519pp. Abacus. £4.95. 0 349 13174 0. 0 First published by Hodder and Stoughton in 1982 and reviewed in the TLS of August 13 that year. The reviewer wrote that Philip Short "is that best kind of foreign correspondent: one who feels a deep sympathy for the people and the territory he is covering, yet who never forsakes a cool objectivity in assessing their triumphs and tragedies, the latter unfortunately forming the dominant theme."

Philosophy

ALASDAIR MACINTYRE. Marxism and Christianity. 143pp. Duckworth. £4.95. 0 71561733 8. 0 In this book (first published in its present version in 1968 and reviewed in the TLS of May 22, 1969) Alasdair MacIntyre explores the ground common to these two great creeds. Each (he observes) offers members of an oppressed class both the consciousness of playing a leading role in a huge world-historical drama and in the hope of participating in a better, juster society in the hereafter. This is no accident, Hegel's Absolute Idealism was designed as a substitute for a discredited Christian revelation, and Marx made Hegel's concept of alienation (i.e. the Fall) central to his own, albeit materialist, system. If we are to make sense of Marx's eschatology (says MacIntyre), following here, as in the question of

alienation, the line of Lukács), we must see that he can have no blueprint for the socialist paradise to come because in so far as the proletariat become involved in the Labour movement they become self-conscious, and so free, so that in principle no one can predict what solution they will find to the problem of how men are to live together in joyful harmony.

K.A.M.C.C.

Travel and Topography

WYNHAM LEWIS. Journey into Barbary. Morocco Writings and Drawings. Edited by C. J. Fox. 234pp. Sanata Barbara: Black Sparrow. \$12.50. 0 87685 518 4. 0 Wynham Lewis travelled to Morocco in 1931, and two books resulted; one was *Filibusters in Barbary*, first published in 1932; the other, unfinished and unpublished (though two extracts appeared as articles in 1933), was *Kasbahs and Souks*. Most of *Filibusters in Barbary*, and the two articles are printed along with excerpts from the abandoned *Kasbahs and Souks* in this beautifully produced book. The accounts bear witness to Lewis's vigorous admiration for the character and culture of the Barbary who inhabited the Sous area and the "Rio de Oro" of the Western Sahara, and for the "Roman" Resident-General of the Protectorate, Marshal Lyautey; his equal contempt for the mercantile and entrepreneurial interests which ousted Lyautey, the "democratic bureaucracy" and "crooked radical lawyer politicians" of the Third Republic; and, most importantly, to Lewis's aggressively unconventional vision brought to bear on landscape, architecture and human beings. An exceptionally informative and perceptive introduction by the editor sketches the historical and political background to Lewis's travels, characterizes the book as "not so much a travelogue as a spirited adventure in semi-fiction", and quotes a letter from Lewis in which he insists that the "picturesque and the 'artistic mission'" - "throwing into the most comic, unromantic and unattractive light possible... the types selected, in his cosmopolitan colony of France, to show the unsatisfactory operation at a distance of a crooked political system... was a satiric enterprise".

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